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C.I.A. Wins Delay In Bill to Restrict U.S. Job Inquiries

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Aug. 29 — The Senate granted today an 11th-hour plea by the Central Intelligence Agency for a delay in considering a bill designed to protect Federal employes from being asked personal questions.

The action evoked an angry outburst from the bill's author, Sam J. Ervin Jr., Democrat of North Carolina, who said the C.I.A. was seeking a complete execption from the bill to give it the "unmitigated right to kick Federal employes around."

A spokesman said the agency would make no comment on Senator Ervin's charges. However, it was learned that the C.I.A. has complained that the bill might undermine its ability to protect itself from penetration by enemy agents.

Under the bill, which had been scheduled to be debated and possibly voted upon today, Federal agencies would be prohibited from asking their employes about their finances, religion, sex activities or family relationships. It would also forbid questions about employes' outside activities, unrelated to their work, and their race, religion or national origin. In addition the bill would prohibit pressure tactics aimed at coercing Federal workers to buy bonds or support political candidates.

The bill contains an exemption that would permit the C.I.A. and the National Security Agency to ask its employes about their finances, sex attitudes, religion and family affairs if necessary in specific cases to protect the national security.

Fear of Disclosures

However, these agencies would be covered by the other provisions of the law, and the C.I.A. is said to fear that the law would expose it to suits that could embarrass the agency and disclose some of its secrets.

Among the provisions that reportedly worry the C.I.A. are those that give employes the right to have legal counsel present during disciplinary discussions with superiors and that permit employes to bring suits in Federal court to enforce their rights.

Both security agencies are also said to resent the fact that the Federal Bureau of Investigation has been exempted entirely from the bill.

A spokesman for Senator Ervin said today that this was done to give the F.B.I. a free hand in investigating employes of other agencies.

Senator Ervin appeared particularly miffed today because the C.I.A., after declining twice in the last two years to testify publicly about the bill, asked for a delay only hours before the final Senate vote was scheduled to be held.

He said such a request by a Federal agency was "without precedent."

Senate majority leader Mike Mansfield said in an interview that he had "never heard of such a request" before, but that he granted it to give the agency time to explain its case to Senate leaders before the vote was taken.

Mr. Mansfield announced later from the Senate floor that the bill would be taken up on Sept. 19.

In his speech, Senator Ervin said the C. I. A. had given its objections to the bill in a 10-page letter stamped "secret," and in private meetings with his staff.

He said the agency's objections were so "specious" that he insisted that any C. I. A. testimony be given publicly. The intelligence agency has agreed only to private hearings. It is known that a number of changes have been made in the original bill to make it more palatable to the agency.

One significant C. I. A.-inspired amendment modified a section that, in the original version, forbade any agency to ask its employees "to support any candidate, program, or policy of any political party by personal endeavor or contrivation of money or other thing of value."

The C. I. A., which has been accused on occasion of dabbling in foreign political affairs, was reportedly responsible for an amendment that changed this section to apply only to elections within the United States.

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